

The Secret History of St. Domingo: A Graphic Novel Adaptation

An Honors Thesis (ENG 444)

by

Kaylie M. DiGiacomo

Thesis Advisor

Dr. Amit Baishya

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Ball State University

Muncie, Indiana

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Expected Date of Graduation

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Abstract

In 1791, the black slaves of the French colony of St. Domingo broke out in revolt against their masters, beginning an unprecedented revolution which resulted in the the elimination of slavery there and the founding of the Republic of Haiti. The event has since shaped the western hemisphere and impacted our understanding of anticolonial movements, including their political motivations and historical consequences. Leonora Sansay's novel *Secret History; or, the Horrors of St. Domingo* offers a unique fictional vision of the revolution by drawing connections between colonial and anticolonial violence and domestic violence. By adapting this novel to the comic book form, I've visually juxtaposed these two forms of violence to better emphasize their connection, while using the medium to integrate influences from traditional Haitian art styles and play with modern perceptions of the Haitian Revolution.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Amit Baishya for advising me through this project. His recommendations have helped shape this project and caused me to refine my choices to best represent my goals.

I would also like to thank Dr. Maria Windell for her enthusiastic support and knowledgeability of my subject matter. The sources and historical context she provided were invaluable.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Deborah Mix for her advice on how to handle the medium. Her suggestions molded my creative choices to create a final product that reflects the strengths of its form.

Statement of Purpose

The Secret History of St. Domingo: A Graphic Novel Adaptation is an adaptation of Leonora Sansay's *Secret History; or, the Horrors of St. Domingo* to the graphic novel form. *Secret History* is a fictional story set in the French colony of St. Domingo during what was called at the time the "slave rebellion". Today we refer to this event as the Haitian Revolution, a violent struggle which took place roughly between 1791 and 1802 and culminated in the founding of the present day Republic of Haiti. Sansay's novel is a unique account of the Haitian Revolution in that it is told from the perspective of an American woman named Mary, ostensibly based on Sansay herself, and told in a series of letters to Sansay's real life friend, the former vice president Aaron Burr. The novel juxtaposes the violence of the revolution, told in graphic terms, with the story of the narrator's sister Clara, who suffers the domestic abuse of her French husband. The combination of these two narratives creates a holistic image of the relationship between colonial violence and the role of the woman. In adapting the text to a graphic novel, it was my intention to utilize visual juxtaposition to further understand this relationship. Furthermore, in a historiographical sense, it was my interest to raise awareness in an American audience of the Haitian Revolution as an important event in Western history and play with contemporary perceptions of Haiti as the first independent nation created by black slaves.

My research for this project followed two separate and occasionally overlapping tracks. The first track focused on placing the Haitian Revolution into context as a historical event and a point of fascination in the contemporary Western world. In an article describing how the revolution has been understood as a historical event, Thomas Reinhardt notes that despite the "enormous effect" the revolution has had in the Western hemisphere, "its leaders are buried in the depths of historical

insignificance... its economic, political, and social effects in the Caribbean and abroad hushed up, hidden under multiple layers of silence,” (Reinhardt 5). This lack of awareness outside of interested spheres was one of the reasons I was drawn to *Secret History* as an account, albeit a fictional one, of the revolution for adaptation. I continued my research consulting scholars like Sibylle Fischer, Colin Dayan, and Doris Garraway whose collective works helped me to understand the impact of the revolution and contemporary attitudes toward Haiti, which shaped many of my visual choices as I began writing.

The other track of my research was simply to ensure a degree of visual and historical accuracy in my descriptions. I consulted various books on period fashion, images of St. Domingo, and portraits of some of the historical figures I incorporated. For instance, General Rochambeau, who led the French against the rebellion during the last year of the revolution, had portraits printed in several history books from which I based his likeness in my adaptation. I also used these sources to identify the correct flora and fauna of the island, the direction from which the sun would rise, and home design for the period. Most of these considerations were made during my writing process rather than before it.

After my initial research I chose an excerpt from the book which I thought would best exemplify not only the story that Sansay has to tell, but also the revolution as an event. The chapter I drew from was Letter VII, with some narration borrowed from the preceding and following chapters to better place the excerpt in context with the rest of the book. I chose this chapter because it contains instances of the two major narratives in the story: the revolution and Clara’s marriage. In the chapter, these narratives begin separately and overlap in the end, with some rather explosive responses from the characters involved. The chapter juxtaposes brutal descriptions of the revolution with the luxurious interiors in which Clara, Mary, and General Rochambeau interact. When the two instances come

together, we find Clara's husband St. Louis returning from his post and bringing the violence into the luxurious space.

In order to convey this sense of two narratives converging, as well as the difference in tone between them, I decided to describe all of the scenes with St. Louis and the battle with revolutionary forces in color. These color choices varied from realistic to bold, almost surreal ones, depending on the intensity of the scene. For instance on page eleven (pages twelve and thirteen of the graphic novel), when St. Louis leads his men to attempt to recover Fort Belleair, it is dusk. The figures are all in silhouette against a backdrop of bright turquoise sky. As guns fire, the muzzle flashes fill the sky with white light. The white overcomes the turquoise by the final panel, right before we transition into a scene with Clara. All scenes with Clara prior to St. Louis' return home are described as being in grayscale. In addition to drawing a contrast between the bright, passionate colors of the battle scenes, the grayscale allowed me to create large, white spaces in which Clara's story could be told. These spaces thus feel almost absurdly luxurious in their size, but cold in their lack of familiarity and coziness. This was intended to mimic Mary's description of Clara, whose "heart rejects the futile splendour that surrounds her," (Sansay 40).

When the two separate narratives converge, color infuses the large space. St. Louis returns home, angry at his wife for leaving home with the man she has been flirting with and at Rochambeau for sending him on a suicide mission, at the moment the sun rises. On pages fourteen through seventeen (fifteen and sixteen), the sun casts an orange light, which steadily grows and fills the room, becoming more and more red, while St. Louis rages at his two perceived enemies. As the situation calms and St. Louis and Clara fall into an exhausted, emotional state, the colors fade to sleepy pastel clays and baby

blues. This combination of St. Louis' color and Clara's gray, exemplifying their two narratives, blends together to create a spiritless color scheme that characterizes their relationship.

Aside from color choices, I made several other creative choices to differentiate my adaptation from the original while still evoking it. One of these was the inclusion of the opening scene, in which we pan down from a star to focus on the head of Dutty Boukman on a stick. Boukman was an early leader in the Haitian Revolution. Some contemporary accounts claim he presided over a Vodou ceremony which inspired the rebellion. According to Gothenburg University researcher Markel Thylefors, "the ceremony forms an important part of Haitian national identity as it relates to the very genesis of Haiti," (Thylefors 14). This ceremony came to be characterized as a pact with the devil by several religious and historical accounts. In the interest of undercutting this view, I introduced Boukman at his death, an event that was particularly brutal on the part of the French, who decapitated him and displayed his head to their enemies. This denies the expectation of the revolutionaries to be savage and the French to be civil. As *Secret History* and my adaptation show, both sides committed equally violent acts.

While writing my adaptation, I kept my understanding of the brutality of the revolution, its political intentions and importance, and modern perceptions of the event and of current day Haiti in the back of my mind. These influences led to subtle choices which I made to update Sansay's novel while still holding true to its original story. Several details of my excerpt were changed for the sake of length and efficiency, like the choice to have Rochambeau accompany Clara home when, in the novel, St. Louis goes to meet him in his home. These changes did not interfere with the fundamental story of the book, which conveys a relationship between colonial and patriarchal violence. The very nature of Clara's predicament is closely entwined with the politics of the revolution. Clara's initial flirtation with Rochambeau was intended as a means of escaping the boredom of the island and the isolation of her

marriage to a tyrannical husband; yet in moving from the violent authority of St. Louis to that of Rochambeau, Clara finds herself implicated in a greater system of patriarchal violence- one that encompasses the politics of colonialism as a whole rather than just the gendered divide between men and women.

While attempting to convey this central issue of the story was my main focus, ultimately I tried to create something new. I needed a purpose to write an adaptation of Sansay's novel, otherwise it could simply tell its own story. My purpose was to update *Secret History* to a visual format to better juxtapose its two narratives and to use that visual medium to infuse the story with elements inspired by modern perceptions of the Haitian Revolution. While the figures and settings are intended to be historically accurate, the colors give the graphic novel a surreal feeling, inspired by traditional Haitian art. This color is used to differentiate and then blend the story's two separate narratives. Other changes were made to give the graphic novel a sense of individual cohesiveness, such as inclusions of narration from other chapters and the opening with Dutty Boukman. *The Secret History of St. Domingo* graphic novel adaptation is thus an update of Leonora Sansay's novel into a visual medium which I hope will attract attention to this important and often forgotten moment in history.

Annotated Bibliography

Dayan, Colin. *Haiti, History, and the Gods*. Berkeley: University of California, 1995. Print.

Dayan engages with history, literature, and religion to understand the development of Haiti as a nation and a source of curious fascination. This source was important in integrating a contemporary understanding of Haiti into my interpretation of Sansay's *St. Domingo*. In the interest of creating something that goes beyond the original novel, I wanted to visually incorporate allusions to Haitian vodou into my comic, thereby utilizing the form and making developing beyond my source material.

Fischer, Sibylle. *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*. Durham: Duke UP, 2004. Print.

Fischer traces how the events of the Haitian Revolution have been suppressed in historical records, arguing that this disavowal is central to the development of the modern Western world. Understanding the suppression of the revolution is tied to my research on the perception of Haiti, something I hoped to incorporate and experiment with in my adaptation.

Garraway, Doris Lorraine. *The Libertine Colony: Creolization in the Early French Caribbean*. Durham: Duke UP, 2005. Print.

Garraway's readings highlight how French colonial writers characterized the Caribbean as a space of spiritual, social, and moral depravity. Parallel to the perceptions of revolutionaries, the character of the decadent and brutal colonists make up the second half of our cultural imagination of the Haitian Revolution. This reading helped to inform my

depiction of the colony of St. Domingo, playing on these perceptions of decadence by laying them alongside the brutality of the revolution.

Garraway, Doris Lorraine. *Tree of Liberty: Cultural Legacies of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 2008. Print.

Tree of Liberty is comprised of essays which deal with how we understand and represent the Haitian Revolution. I specifically focused on the third section, which dealt with literary representations of the revolution. Garraway warns that the revolution can be “dauntingly obscure” and thus difficult to depict with necessary care. This is an important consideration in my adaptation, as I not only needed to critically analyze Sansay’s depiction, but also my own.

McCloud, Scott. *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1994. Print.

McCloud explains the complexities of the comic book medium in categories of closure, motion, and the progress of time. I’ve referenced this source to make the most of my medium and understand how a comic book can best portray the ideas of Sansay’s novel in a meaningful new way. Beginning from McCloud’s recommendations I developed a unique style that speaks to the themes I hoped to convey.

Reinhardt, Thomas. "200 Years of Forgetting: Hushing up the Haitian Revolution." *Journal of Black Studies* 35.4 (2005): 246-61. *JSTOR*. Web. 19 Feb. 2014.

Reinhardt’s essay briefly outlines some of the historiographical reasons for ignorance and misunderstanding of the Haitian Revolution in many western nations. This source helped

me better understand the status of western perception of the revolution, its motivations and significance, and offered an argument for the importance of awareness of this event, a factor which was important in motivating me in this project.

Sansay, Leonora. *Secret History, Or, The Horrors of St. Domingo ; And, Laura*. Ed. Michael J. Drexler. Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview, 2007. Print.

I formed my adaption primarily from the events of “Letter VII”, but small portions and quotes are integrated from other sections. The adaptation begins with the same basic action of the section and builds outward to create something that can be read independently of surrounding chapters.

Thylefors, Markel (March 2009) "'Our Government is in Bwa Kayiman:' a Vodou Ceremony in 1791 and its Contemporary Significations" *Stockholm Review of Latin American Studies*, Issue No. 4. Web. 4 Apr. 2014.

Thylefors describes the significance of the vodou ceremony in Bwa Kayiman, the event which some contemporary accounts claimed to have inspired the Haitian Revolution.

This source was important not only as I integrated the historical figure of Dutty Boukman into my script, but it also as a voice of the cultural significance of the event in the present population of Haiti.

The Secret History of St. Domingo

An adaptation of Leonora Sansay's *Secret History; or, the
Horrors of St. Domingo* by Kaylie DiGiacomo

This graphic novel is imagined as a quarto (9.5" x 12") sized
book in color and gray scale.

Epigraph

The husband owes protection to his wife, the wife obedience to
her husband.

- Napoleonic Code 1800-1820

PAGE ONE

Panel 1: Big splash page. We're looking up at the dark blue sky, focused on one big blur of a star.

CAPTION

St. Domingo 1791

PAGE TWO

Panel 1: Four stacked rectangular panels. Each one panning down and out from the star. In this first panel, we are looking at the same star, further out. More detail of the stars around it is visible.

SOUNDFX

Ba-dum Ba-dum (Coming from below. SFX is small, grows larger in the successive panels)

Panel 2: Now we are even further out. The star is indistinguishable from the rest. We see a dark blue sky speckled with white.

SOUNDFX

Ba-dum Ba-dum

Panel 3: We have now panned down to the object of our interest. The head of the Dutty Boukman on a stick. We do not see the ground or any surrounding details, only Dutty, the stick, and the sky behind them. Dutty is grotesque looking, and not just because his head is on a stick. He was a big, terrifying man with a face like an African carving. He looks enraged, as if he

went down fighting. Off panel, his face is lit with the orange glow of a fire.

SOUNDFX

Ba-dum Ba-dum

Panel 4: We pan out from Dutty to see his enemies beside him. They are not painted savages, but two members of the French Garde Nationale. They look crisp in their blue jackets and bicorne hats. Splashes, smears, and speckles of blood are on their otherwise clean white uniforms. One plays a smart looking drum slung around his neck. The other looks as if he's just planted Dutty in the ground. Their faces are half black in shadows under the brims of their hats. Proud, triumphant white eyes gleam out. Beneath Dutty we can now see a sign is nailed to the post. It reads "Ceci est la tete de Boukman chef des rebelles."

SOUNDFX

Ba-dum (coming from the drum)

CAPTION

"This is the head of the rebel leader Boukman."

PAGE THREE

Panel 1: Four panels in a grid. It's a new day. We look over a town in St. Domingo. In the background we see a foggy cloud forest up the side of a hill. A French fort on the hill sticks

out amid the green. The sun rises just behind the hill, shooting out beams. In the foreground the town is a mixture of desolation and decadence. We look over the roof tops. A handful of candy-colored french villas with dark wood shutters and vine covered balconies are intact. The rest of the town is in ruins, with homes missing roofs, others burned to the ground.

CAPTION

St. Domingo 1802

Panel 2: Push in on the fort on the hill. Now closer, we can see a pillar of smoke floating up from the fort over the trees. It is black against the morning sky.

Panel 3: Push in closer. We're right at the gate of the fort. Bodies of French soldiers of the Garde Nationale are twisted in a pile with a handful of black revolutionaries. The revolutionaries wear any combination of French and Spanish uniforms, white ditto suits, or rags. In the background one of the wooden watch towers in the fort is on fire. The revolutionaries have taken over. Some are dragging bodies to the pile. A man in full uniform stands in the center of the panel. He's wearing a bicorne with a big feather, golden epaulettes, and a bright red coat.

Panel 4: Pull in closer to the man in the middle. We're right on his face. It is Jean Jacques Dessalines, leader of the slave rebellion. He's a handsome fellow with bushy sideburns, an angular jaw, and prominent cheek bones. Angle his face and give it the expression of the iconic Lansdowne portrait of George Washington. He is wearing a bright red coat and red velvet bicorne hat over a white uniform.

CAPTION

The brigands have at length made the attack they so long threatened.

PAGE FOUR

Panel 1: Two panels, one thin rectangle stacked on a large square. We're looking at the side of a bed, on level with it, and from the angle of the footboard. A man is slumped off the side of the bed. We only see him from the torso down. His body is limp and has pulled some of the dark blue blanket off the side. We don't see his wound, but there's a dark stain on the blanket near his chest, in the upper portion of the panel.

CAPTION

They killed the officer and twelve soldiers.

Panel 2: We're tightly focused on the upper right corner of the bed. At the bottom right of the panel we can see the shoulder of the man. On the bed is a woman holding an infant to her chest. She's nowhere beyond her thirties, pale, with blond hair that still looks messed from being slept on. Her blue eyes are wide but she's clearly gone: they're glazed over and empty. Her brow is furrowed as if she died with a look of horror on her face. We see that she's holding a bundled infant in her arms, but there's no indication of movement.

CAPTION

The wife of the officer had gone the day before to stay with him.

PAGE FIVE

Panel 1: Three panels stacked on top of one another. This top one is long and thin. We're on the edge of the town, backed up just along the line of trees. The houses here are mostly the ruins of old villas. Makeshift tents are strung off of rubble and half standing stone houses. In the shadow of the hillside, this area is hidden from the rising sun, making the yellow light from the windows of one intact home stand out in gray. Set this house to the far right of the panel.

SOLDIER (off, from door on house)

The men are nervous.

Panel 2: Interior of the house. We're looking down at an angle into a room. A lantern hangs from the top of the panel, casting an aura of yellow light. In the center is a small round table scattered with papers, a map, and a candle. A French officer leans on the table, his hands planted on it and shoulders slumped. He's looking down. He's in all white, his blue coat slung over a chair to the right of the panel and his hat on the table before him. His black hair is flattened as if the hat has permanently pushed it down. This is St. Louis. We do not see his face fully yet. Another soldier, younger and of lesser rank, stands to the left of the panel closer to the door, holding his hips, one hand above a sword on his belt.

SOLDIER

The rebels have been silent for days. There's something floating down off that mountain, some of their magic, and meanwhile the general has substituted parties for action.

Panel 3: We're at level with St. Louis, looking across the table at him and the soldier. Their faces are yellow in the light. St. Louis is a worn out looking man with dark shadows under his eyes and black stubble on his face. He has a nose like Lenin's and sports an a la souvarov. He looks at the soldier out of the corner of his eye.

ST. LOUIS
The general...

PAGE SIX

Panel 1: Four panels in an uneven grid. We're outside, looking directly at the line of trees in the foggy cloud forest where they open up into the edge of town. In the low light, the trees and moss covered vines look black against the white fog.

Panel 2: We're close up on the profile of a French soldier. He's young. His bicorne is tipped over his face and he's sleeping at his post. The backdrop is yellow sky.

Panel 3: The same image of the forest, but now shadows appear between the trees. They're revolutionaries. The silhouettes brandish swords and rifles with long bayonets.

CAPTION

The negroes were advancing silently into town.

Panel 4: Close up on the young soldier again. He's awake now, his head tipped back, his eyes open in surprise.

PAGE SEVEN

Panel 1: Three panels, two small stacked on one large. We're back in the room with St. Louis. He's sitting in a chair against the wall, and we're close in on him, looking up at his face. He's holding a golden ring between two fingers, just in front of his face. His eyes are fluttered shut as if he's thoughtful over the it. The yellow light surrounds him like an aura.

Panel 2: Push in on St. Louis. He's gripping the ring in his fist and has put it to his forehead. His brow is etched and he looks as if he's rubbing away a headache.

Panel 3: Pull way out to show St. Louis in his chair. It's a large, solid looking wooden chair with no adornment. He's sprawled dramatically with his legs open. His hands now grip the arm rests as if he's surprised. He's heard the ring of the warning bell and is now posed to jump from his chair. He's looking a bit Byronic, surrounded by a lantern glow and dramatic shadows.

SOUNDFX

Bong! Bong! (from the left side)

PAGE EIGHT

Panel 1: Full page spread. We're in the same room, same instance. Pull out from St. Louis to the whole room. The table is to his right, the door to his left. He's on his feet. He's in a dynamic action pose, pulling the last inch of his sword from the sheath with his right arm. His other arm is thrown behind

him as if he's just used it to push off the chair. his head is turned toward the door.

CAPTION

St. Louis, who commands a company in the Garde Nationale, was the first on the field.

SOUNDFX

CHINK (from the sheath)

SOUNDFX

Bong! (from doorway)

ST. LOUIS

To arms!

PAGE NINE

Panel 1: Nine panels in a grid, three across and three down, of equal size. The panels are all in a highly contrasted gray scale and gutter in black. We're looking at the profile of St. Louis' wife Clara from the shoulders up. She's against the left side of the panel, opposite a window. The background is black. The window looks out onto whiteness. Clara is young, no more than twenty. She's listless, passively concerned, like a princess trapped in a tower. Her dark hair is pinned back. A few curls frame her face. She's wearing a simple white charmeuse dress with ruffled sleeves.

Panel 2: Push in, still in profile. Clara's head is lowered and her eyes are closed.

MARY (off)

He's calling for you again.

Panel 3: Close up of Clara. Angled but in front. Her eyes are open slightly, her eyelashes still hang over them. Her face is pained.

CLARA

I've given my answer.

Panel 4: We're on Mary now. She stands in the doorway, which is outlined as white. Mary is a bit older than Clara. Her dark hair is down, pulled around her shoulder in large curls. She has a few freckles across her cheeks. She's wearing a similar dress to Clara's, but with a thin dark ribbon tied under her bosom.

MARY

He believes you will change your mind now.

Panel 5: Back on Clara. We're close on her neck, her youthful lips. Her hand is pressed against her collar. Her fingers graze her neck.

Panel 6: Back to the door. Mary is moving forward, toward Clara. A soldier has appeared in the doorway. He's very handsome, with dark black curls and long eyelashes. In his twenties. His uniform is clean.

Panel 7: Push in on the soldier. He's in the motion of pulling his bicorne down from his bowed head.

SOLDIER

General Rochambeau requests your company again.

Panel 8: Close on Clara's face. Her eyes are blank and her lips are parted.

SOLDIER

He has news he can communicate to none but yourself.

Panel 9: Close on Mary and Clara, who now stand beside each other, focused on their arms, no higher or lower. Clara's hand is on Mary's arm, gripping so tightly that the fabric of her sleeve pinches.

PAGE TEN

Panel 1: Same structure as former page: Nine panels in a grid, three across and three down, of equal size. Grayscale and black gutter. We're outside a villa on a little hill. It's white with dark shutters, two stories, with a balcony that covers the entire front, held up by large white pillars. A wide set of stone stairs lead up to a main door. Two tall palm trees stand on either side of the steps.

Panel 2: We're inside, just on the other side of the door, where the door stands to the left of the panel. The main hall is so large we can barely distinguish details of it. The walls are white. A few large shadows from windows off panel are on the floor. Past the doorway stands Mary. Her hair is now up and covered in a chiffon veil that's tied under her chin. Just a few steps beyond her is Clara, looking as though she's moving forward quickly into the hall. We're pulled out far from both of them, giving the room a sense of huge depth, and we're looking at them in profile.

Panel 3: Push in with the same angle, on Clara, who is joined in the panel by General Rochambeau. He's a tall man in his late forties, dressed in mostly white, with a sash around his waist and tall black boots. He wears a powdered wig. Clara's arms are stretched out toward him. She looks nervous. The general is relaxed.

CLARA

What have you to tell me?

CLARA

Where is St. Louis?

Panel 4: Push in again with the same angle. Clara stands right before Rochambeau. He's clasping both her hands, pulling them down as if to calm her.

ROCHAMBEAU

Calm your spirits.

Panel 5: Close in on their hands. Clara has pulled her hands out of his.

Panel 6: On Rochambeau's face, from the front at an angle. He is smirking, lips parted, with the crinkle of smile lines around his eyes.

ROCHAMBEAU

Your husband is well.

Panel 7: On Clara's face, straight on. Her eyes are closed, her eyebrows furrowed. Her hands are crossed over her collar.

ROCHAMBEAU (off)

He has behaved gallantly. He was the first on the field this morning.

Panel 8: Close on Clara. Her face is now turned to the right side of the panel, as if she looks across her left shoulder. She glares out of the corner of her eyes to Rochambeau off panel.

CLARA

Then why have you alarmed me so unnecessarily and made me come here?

Panel 9: Pull out onto Clara and Rochambeau, in profile. Clara has turned her body slightly away from him, toward us. His hand is on her shoulder soothingly. The smirk remains on his face. Clara's expression has gone from anger to worry. Her face is pinched and nervous.

CLARA

He will never believe my motive for coming, and I shall be killed!

PAGE ELEVEN

Panel 1: Five panels. One rectangle on top, four in uneven grid stacked below. Grayscale and black gutter. We're in a large parlor, pulled out very far to show the full size of the room. On the right side of the panel we see the wall is lined with huge, arched windows. Dark curtains with valances are pulled to the side, and everything in front of the windows casts shadows across the room. In front of the windows is a large desk and chair upholstered with patterned fabric. Rochambeau leans

against the desk, one ankle crossed casually over the other. He's holding papers in his hands. To the side of the desk is a soldier. Across from them stand Mary and Clara, who have their arms linked together.

ROCHAMBEAU

Your husband will be out all night. Though numbers have been killed and wounded at his post, he has remained unhurt.

Panel 2: This panel is slightly thinner than the next. Rochambeau has turned and laid the paper on the desk. Close in on his hand as he leans to sign it with an ink pen.

ROCHAMBEAU

He is indispensable to me.

Panel 3: On Clara and Mary. Their arms are still hooked. Mary is looking off, as if fascinated by her surroundings. Clara looks forward toward us. Toward Rochambeau. There is a large, dark door behind them.

CLARA

Then I must return and wait for him.

Panel 4: On Rochambeau. His arm is stretched out, handing the paper, now folded, to the soldier, but he is looking forward to us and at Clara. His pleasant eyes have narrowed and he is frowning.

ROCHAMBEAU

Think of your own safety, Clara. You are much too exposed there.

CLARA

I am thinking of my safety.

Panel 5: Back on Clara and Mary, pulled out. They've moved toward the door. Clara has half turned back toward Rochambeau while Mary has her back to us as she walks to the door.

ROCHAMBEAU

If you will not stay, allow me to keep you company there.

PAGE TWELVE

Panel 1: Three panels stacked on top of one another. We're outside. St. Louis and his men are trekking up the hill to the fort. We see them in profile, lined in black and gray with shadow. They are against a backdrop of bright turquoise sky, no detail otherwise. Every panel on this page and the next is all black/gray figures in shadow and a bright turquoise sky. St. Louis leads them left to right across the panel. He is hunched over, sword drawn, cutting past low lying tropical plants.

CAPTION

The brigands were repulsed from town, but those who had taken possession of fort Belleair made vigorous resistance.

Panel 2: We're looking up at the fort now in a low-angle shot. It stands like a black monolith, dead center in the panel, looking imposing. The gate is closed. In the sky above it a large, blurry white star glows just to the left of center. It is the same star from the night Dutty was killed. From above the wall we see two little flashes of white light, the blasts from rifles firing in the darkness.

SOUNDFX

Pfow (from both light flashes)

Panel 3: Close and in profile on St. Louis and a soldier behind him. St. Louis is almost in full black silhouette. We can see his mouth open, shouting. The soldier behind him has taken a bullet to the head. We see it as a flash of white connecting with his forehead in front of the turquoise sky. His head is snapped back slightly as if it's just connected.

SOUNDFX

Shhhk (from shot)

ST. LOUIS

Onward!

PAGE THIRTEEN

Panel 1: Five panels. Two rectangles stacked on two squares beneath them, and one rectangle panel at the bottom. We're still in profile on St. Louis and his men. They're bent forward, swords and rifles brandished. St. Louis leads a charge. Two more beams of white light are shooting across the sky toward them.

Panel 2: Push in on some of St. Louis' men. Now the white beams have connected with two of them. One in the chest, another to the face.

SOUNDFX

Shhhk. Shhhk.

Panel 3: This panel and the next are slightly taller than the others. Close in on St. Louis in $\frac{3}{4}$ profile, looking right. The shadows of a few men stand beyond his shoulder. We now see St. Louis in full color. His cheeks are burning red and the circles under his eyes are brown against his otherwise pallid skin. His mouth is open in a shout. The following word bubble is between this and the next panel, over the gutter. It is unclear who is speaking:

Forward! Take what is ours!

Panel 4: We've switched to the side of the revolutionaries who stand at the open gate of the fort, looking out. Close in on their leader, Dessalines, mirroring St. Louis with a $\frac{3}{4}$ profile facing left. His mouth is open in a shout. He has his sword drawn and raised at shoulder height.

Panel 5: Pull out. We see St. Louis and his men clashing face to face with revolutionaries that have come out of the fort. St. Louis is indistinguishable in the tangle of shadows. There are so many rifles firing that a white glow at the level of the men in rising up to meet the turquoise sky. Bayonets and swords connect. It's difficult to tell which shadow is a soldier and which is a revolutionary.

SOUNDFX

Pfow Pfow Pfow Shhhk. (scattered)

PAGE FOURTEEN

Panel 1: Three rectangle panels stacked. Close in on St. Louis from a low-angle. His face is twisted, his mouth open in horror.

He's reeling back with his sword held up. The sky around him is filled with white glow of gunfire.

SOUNDFX

Pfow Pfow Crack (scattered)

ST. LOUIS

Where are the line troops?

Panel 2: Close in on the ground. It's littered with bodies, all of them French soldiers. Everything glows a yellowy-white around them.

SOUNDFX

Shhk Pfow (above)

ST. LOUIS (Off)

Good God they were right behind us!

Panel 3: We're again looking up at the fort in a low-angle shot. It's now a big black shadow surrounded by a glowing white aura. Revolutionaries pour out of the gate like a swarm. The white star is now centered over the fort.

ST. LOUIS (off)

Retreat! Retreat!

PAGE FOURTEEN

Panel 1: Five panels, four in an uneven grid above, one rectangle below. Grayscale and black gutters. We're looking at Clara in profile. She's sitting on a sofa against a white back drop. Her body is slouched and her face is hidden in her hands.

Her pretty curls are disheveled. She's to the left of the panel. In the rest we see a room in darkness.

CAPTION

A soldier, sent by St. Louis, had inquired for Clara in our absence. Not finding her, he returned immediately to camp.

Panel 2: Push in on Clara in the same place, same posture.

ROCHAMBEAU (off)

You should get some rest, mademoiselle.

Panel 3: Push in on Clara. She's turned to look at the general. Her face is flushed. It looks like she's been crying, but there are no tears now, as if none are left. Little shadows have appeared under her eyes. Her lips are parted in a tight frown.

CLARA

How can I rest?

Panel 4: On Rochambeau, in a full body shot. He stands in front of the window. The sky is black, but a little white light is glowing from the bottom of the window. He's removed his powdered wig, revealing a head of flattened straight hair.

ROCHAMBEAU

What could such brigands do in the face of a trained soldier?
Even so, you'll do him little help by sitting up waiting for
him.

CLARA

That is not what I fear.

Panel 5: Pull out, looking at Clara and Rochambeau from the side. They've both turned their heads, looking toward us, responding to a sound. Clara looks horrified. Her hands are clasped around her stomach as if she's sick. Rochambeau is startled, his hand to his mouth. A little orange light is now coming through the window into the otherwise grayscale setting.

SOUNDFX

Bang (off)

CLARA

I warned you to leave. Why wouldn't you leave?

PAGE FIFTEEN

Panel 1: Four panels. Two tall rectangles above two long, thin panels stacked below. Full, vibrant colors again. St. Louis, muddy and bloodstained, stands in front of us against a burning orange backdrop, indiscernible from wall to floor. This orange backdrop continues on this page in the next, growing more and more red until it is blood red in the last panel. A line of dirty boot prints trails behind him. His arms are spread out at his sides as if he's puffing up. His face is splashed with puffs of gunpowder. His mouth sneers, bearing teeth.

ST. LOUIS

I know your conduct madam!

Panel 2: On St. Louis. He's flashed to Clara, who has stood up. In color, we see she has pale white skin and rosy cheeks. Her dress is a soft yellow. St. Louis stands at her side with his

hand squeezing her arm. The other hand it pointing aggressively off panel, to where St. Louis glares. Clara's eyes are squeezed shut in pain.

ST. LOUIS

You left the house contrary to my desire.

Panel 3: Push in on St. Louis. He is at the far left of the panel, in profile, holding Clara near him as if he holds her by the shoulder from behind. His face is animalistic, enraged. Spit flies from his lips as he yells. Clara has opened her eyes. Her face has changed from pain to indignance. On the right side of the panel is the vaguely detailed silhouette of Rochambeau, standing passively. St. Louis has his arm stretched past Clara, pointing at Rochambeau.

ST. LOUIS

I shall find any means of punishing you and covering you with the shame of the *monster* who has sought to destroy me!

Panel 4: Pull out and up, looking down slightly. We're looking at them from the opposite side of the room, so flip St. Louis to the right and Rochambeau to the left. They're all in shadow, black on the orange. We can see some detail of the tiled floor. St. Louis now stands with his hands out stretched. One is still on Clara's shoulder, and she's bending back slightly as if the force is tipping her. The other hand is directly pointing at Rochambeau, who is closer now, approaching them with arms stretched out.

ROCHAMBEAU

St. Louis, I am glad to see you're well. I was just thinking of you, but I did not know you had been relieved.

PAGE SIXTEEN

Panel 1: Seven panels. Four long rectangles in line on top, one large panel in the middle, and two panels below. We're close on Clara, looking down and at an angle. St. Louis' hand is tight on her right shoulder. She's looking up, almost at us. Her lips are parted, but her face is neither pained or afraid. She looks passive.

ST. LOUIS

I have not been relieved.

Panel 2: Close on St. Louis' face. The two sides of his head are cut off by the gutter. His eyebrows are in a deep glare, casting shadows over his eyes.

ST. LOUIS

But I have left my post...

Panel 3: On Clara. Push in. Same angle, same expression as before, just closer. We still see eyes, mouth, and the side of St. Louis' hand.

ST. LOUIS

where I was unjustly placed and kept all night...

Panel 4: On St. Louis. Push in. Just one glaring eye.

ST. LOUIS

Abandoned by the troop which followed mine...

Panel 5: Pull out on the whole room. It's awash with red. St. Louis has let Clara go and she is halfway down in a fall to the sofa. The general still has his hands stretched out as if to calm St. Louis down, but there's a smirk on his face and his eyes glimmer. St. Louis has taken a threatening step toward him, but dropped his accusing hand.

ST. LOUIS

You expected, no doubt, that I would have the shared fate of my companions, which I have escaped, and am here to tell you what everybody believes but nobody dares utter-

Panel 6: Close in on Clara as she falls back into the sofa. Her hair flies into her face with the force. Her hands are in front of her as if in a vain attempt at balance.

ST. LOUIS (off)

That you are a villain!

Panel 7: On Rochambeau, down and from an angle. He's smirking. His chin is tipped up. Close up and in the light we can see his hair is blond and his eyes blue. Distinctive crinkles form around his smiling eyes.

ROCHAMBEAU

You know to what consequences you are exposed for leaving your post.

Panel 1: Five panels, one rectangle on top, four in a grid below. The red has faded to a clay color. The figures are in silhouette. We're on St. Louis, who has grabbed Clara and is leading her by the wrist from left to right across the panel.

Panel 2: Focus on a big brown door, half open, from above and at an angle. We see Clara being thrown in by a push from St. Louis. She's mid stumble, with her body turning slightly toward us. Her skirt blows behind her. Her hair is now falling in tangles from the bun which once held it.

Panel 3: Same angle and focus. Now Clara has turned and is looking out the door. St. Louis' hand and arm are in the frame as he holds the side of the door, ready to slam it. Clara has caught herself and is standing up tall. Despite her bold posture, her face just looks tired now. She's resigned.

Panel 4: Pull out to the room again. St. Louis is at the right of the panel, in profile, next to the door. He's still in the action of turning from slamming it. Fill in more details of the room now. The walls are a soft pink color, the tiles white. Red swag curtains hang over windows. The sofa Clara was on is patterned with red and yellow. Rochambeau is at the other end of the panel. He's walking out of the room.

SOUNDFX

Bam (from the door)

ST. LOUIS

You are my superior, but if you are not a coward you will give me the satisfaction due a gentleman you have injured.

Panel 5: Same perspective. St. Louis stands in the same place, standing at rest. Rochambeau is gone.

PAGE EIGHTEEN

Panel 1: Splash page. St. Louis and Mary stand on either side of a window that opens onto a balcony. Outside we see over the destroyed town and up the hillside, to where the fort now sits. In the detail we can see it, half appears to be a pile of rubble now, and a band of smoke still rises from behind the wall. Inside, St. Louis faces away from Mary, his arms folded over his chest. He's now out of his bloodied coat, standing only in his stained white clothing. Mary holding out her hands, pleading. Her face is anxious, and she looks as if she's speaking quickly. She is freshly dressed in a light dress with a purple flower print, and her hair is up.

CAPTION

When I arose I attempted to soothe St. Louis. I told him how the general had brought Clara to his house by causing her fear for St. Louis' life, and how she had absolutely refused staying, and how he had insisted on remaining by her side despite all protest. St. Louis forgot his rage and sufferings in the assurance that Clara had not been faithless.

PAGE NINETEEN

Panel 1: Three rectangle panels stacked. We're in the bedroom with Clara. She sits on the end of the bed, her face in her hands, pointed toward us at a slight angle. The bed is dressed with a blue satin cover. The room is otherwise simple, with a solid but plain wooden headboard. A window shines beyond her, to the left of the bed. St. Louis is standing right off Clara, his back mostly to us. His posture is slouched and tired.

CAPTION

Nothing can be more brutal than St. Louis in his rage. I have seen him throw her on the ground and drag her by the hair. I fly to defend her, but his aspect so terrifies me I am obliged to withdraw.

Panel 2: Same perspective. St. Louis is now on his knees, his arms folded on her lap and his head buried in them. Clara is looking up. Her skin is pale and gray. Her hair is frizzy. Her two thin arms support her on the bed. She is exhausted.

CAPTION

When his fits of tenderness return he is as bad in the other extreme. He kneels before her, entreats her pardon, and overwhelms her with caresses more painful to her than the most terrible effects of his ill-humor.

Panel 3: Same perspective. St. Louis' tears have stained down the front of Clara's skirt where her knees bend. She has lowered her head again, now resting it on his, and is holding him gently by the shoulders. Her dark hair hangs around them.

CAPTION

Tears of bitterest regret often fill her eyes when contemplating the splendor which has been so dearly purchased. But I believe Clara is not the first wife that has been locked up this way in St. Domingo.